(b) whether a low cost planetary mission has been conducted by the International Academy of Astronautics in Goa; and

(c) whether basic features of this low cost planetary Mission would be reflected in such projects in future or would these be designed on entirely different technology to avoid snags in "Chandrayaan-I"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The next Moon mission Chandrayaan-II will have an Orbiter, a Lander and Rovers, which uses advanced technologies and will be in tune with technologies internationally.

(b) Yes, Sir. An International Conference of International Academy of Astronautics on 'low Cost Planetary Missions' has been conducted at Goa from August 31, 2009, to September 4, 2009.

(c) In this Conference, some concepts to carry out low cost planetary missions have been discussed. Some of these ideas are futuristic and some can be applied to the immediate missions.

Planet 'X heading towards earth

3190. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:
SHRI NARESH GUJRAL:
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Planet 'X' is heading towards Earth at a speed of 20,00,000 miles a year and may come close to earth or collide with it anytime after 2010 to cause destruction like earthquake and Tsunami;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this has any link with calendar of Maya Civilization; and

(d) what are the remedial measures available with the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir. There is no factual basis for this.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Does not arise.

Tourism after 26/11 terrorist attack on Mumbai

3191. DR. N. JANARDHANA REDDY:Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Tourism industry is still finding it difficult to present the country as safe destination for foreign tourists even after one year of the 26/11 terror attack;

(b) if so, whether several foreign countries are still guiding their citizens not to visit India in view of unsafe destination;

(c) if so, the facts thereof and whether Government has proposed to take up the matter with the tourism department of foreign countries and encourage them to visit India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and steps taken by Government to promote tourists of foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (c) Various Countries have been issuing Travel advisories from time to time, advising their citizens to avoid travel or to take precautions while traveling to areas in the country which are temporarily disturbed. The Ministry of Tourism through its overseas offices and in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs and Indian missions abroad takes up the matter regarding lifting of travel advisories as and when issued by different countries to avoid any adverse impact on tourism to the country.

(d) The Ministry of Tourism has taken several steps to counter the downward trend of inbound tourism and to promote tourism to the country. These include liberalizing the Marketing Development Assistance Scheme for service providers promoting India, organizing Road Shows in important tourist generating markets overseas, arranging familiarisation tours to India for international travel trade and media representatives to keep them updated on safety/security conditions in the country, media campaigns in the print, electronic, online and outdoor media and a "Visit India 2009" scheme, in collaboration with all stakeholders including airlines, hotels, tour operators, State Governments for incentivising travel to India. Recently Government of India has decided to introduce Visa-on-Arrival scheme for tourists from five countries viz. Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg and Japan on a pilot basis for a period of one year.

Decline in number of foreign tourists

†3192. SHRI OM PRAKASH MATHUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a decline in the number of foreign tourists after terrorist attack in a number of metros in the country especially in Jaipur;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government is having any dialogue with Government of other countries in this regard or any such effort is being made to instill faith in foreign tourists to visit India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SULTAN AHMED): (a) and (b) The number of foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in India increased by 5.6% in 2008 over 2007. However, during January - November 2009, a decline of 6.3% in FTAs has been observed over the corresponding period of 2008. This decline may be due to various reasons including global financial slowdown, terrorist activities, H1N1 pandemic, etc.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.